

REMARKS

Reconsideration and allowance of this application are respectfully requested. Claims 35-43 and 45-57 are cancelled. Claims 1-34 and 44 remain in this application and, as amended herein, and are submitted for the Examiner's reconsideration.

The specification has been amended to better conform to the requirements of U.S. practice. No new matter has been added by these amendments.

Claims 2-3, 9, 14, 22-28, 30, and 32-34 have been amended solely to have the claims better conform to the requirements of U.S. practice. None of these amendments is intended to narrow the scope of any of these claims, and no new matter has been added by these amendments.

In the Office Action, claims 1-5, 7-34, and 44 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Walker (U.S. Patent No. 5,794,207). Applicants submit that the claims are patentably distinguishable over the relied on sections of Walker.

As amended herein, claim 1 recites:

wherein the digital data are converted into data used by a process performed with auxiliary digital data corresponding to the digital data, and the auxiliary digital data includes an encryption key.

(Emphasis added.) The relied on sections of Walker neither disclose nor suggest auxiliary digital data that includes an encryption key.

The Examiner asserts that "Walker further discloses ... the digital data are converted into data used by a process performed with auxiliary digital data corresponding to the digital data" and relies on step 1020 of Fig. 10 and on column 16, lines 1-11 of Walker. The relied on sections of the patent, however, are not at all concerned with auxiliary digital data that includes an encryption key.

It follows, for at least the above reasons, that the relied on sections of Walker do not disclose or suggest the combination defined in claim 1 and therefore do not anticipate the claim.

Claims 2-5 and 7-34 depend from claim 1. Therefore, each of these claims is distinguishable over the relied on sections of Walker at least for the same reasons as its parent claim.

Independent claim 44 has been amended to call for features similar to those set out in the above excerpt of claim 1. The claim is therefore patentably distinguishable over the relied on sections of Walker for at least the reasons set out above.

Claim 6 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Walker in view of Fan (U.S. Patent No. 6,580,820). Applicants submit that the claim is patentably distinguishable over the relied on sections of the references.

Claim 6 depends from claim 1 and is therefore is distinguishable over the relied-on sections of Walker for at least the same reasons.

The relied-on sections of Fan do not overcome the deficiencies of the relied-on sections of Walker.

Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests the withdrawal of the rejections under 35 U.S.C. §§ 102(b) and 103(a).

As it is believed that all of the rejections set forth in the Official Action have been fully met, favorable reconsideration and allowance are earnestly solicited. If, however, for any reason the Examiner does not believe that such action can be taken at this time, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner telephone applicant's attorney at (908) 654-5000 in order to overcome any additional objections which the Examiner might have.

Application No.: 10/019,794

Docket No.: SONYJP 3.3-773

If there are any additional charges in connection with this requested amendment, the Examiner is authorized to charge Deposit Account No. 12-1095 therefor.

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Respectfully submitted,

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